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ABSTRACT

This paper reports on a study of the complex ways a planned curriculum can get transformed in practice. The analysis also illustrates how the implemented curriculum can have moral and political significance, in ways that critics of the planned curriculum might not foresee. "Participant example," an actual or hypothetical event in which participants with a role have two interactionally relevant identities--as a participant in the conversation and a character in the example--is used in the analysis. In talking about someone's character, the speaker may be implying something about the actual participant. Thus, in the case study, relationship issues among the actual teacher and students can intermingle with aspects of the official curriculum being discussed. The study is drawn from a 3-year study of "great books" classrooms, focusing on a ninth grade history class of primarily African American students discussion of Plutarch's "Life of Lycurgus." Detailed analyses of the classroom interaction are provided. Findings of the study indicated that the implemented curriculum differed substantially from the planned curriculum. As teachers and students became involved in debate over Sparta, it was clear that the interracial subtext does not concern Spartans at all, but relations in the classroom and contemporary America. The discussion did in fact have unpleasant moral consequence, but these happened in a much more subtle way than expected. Two conclusions can be drawn: (1) the moral and political consequences of school curricula require paying attention to the implemented as well as the planned curriculum; (2) one should not jump to conclusions about the politics of official curricula without attending to their practical implementation. (Contains 10 references.) (ND)

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April, 1995

ACTING OUT THE GREAT BOOKS: A CASE STUDY OF HOW THE IMPLEMENTED CURRICULUM CAN DIFFER FROM THE PLANNED CURRICULUM

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In curriculum units and lesson plans, educators clearly express the pedagogical content and skills that they intend to teach. Actual teaching, however, requires that decontextualized ideas be transformed into pedagogically productive interactional events. As we learn more about the intricacy of classroom interaction (from, for example, Cazden, 1988; Jackson, Boostrom & Hansen, 1993), it has become clear that this transformation must be a complex process (Tochon & Dionne, 1994; Wortham, 1994).

Because actual events of teaching often differ in important ways from the planned curriculum, political issues in education cannot generally be settled by examining the official curriculum alone. Jackson (1968) made this point in his discussion of the "hidden curriculum." This paper supports his insight, by exploring unforeseen political consequences of a particular implemented curriculum. The class discussion analyzed below has white teachers leading black students through a classic of the Western tradition—Plutarch's *Lives*. If a critic examined only the official curriculum, s/he might condemn this class for focusing on texts alien to the students' cultural tradition. The analysis, however, shows a complex relationship between the planned and implemented curriculum in this instance. It also uncovers more damaging social messages being carried by the hidden curriculum.

But, if it's "hidden," how do we study the implemented curriculum? Planned curricula are clearly displayed in accessible documents. Implemented curricula are not. To study these less explicit phenomena, we can draw on work in ethnomethodology and conversation analysis, which has begun to provide more rigorous analyses of naturalistic conversation (e.g., Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson, 1974). Mehan (1979) and others have used this approach with classroom talk, and

have begun to uncover the delicate coordination that goes into apparently routine instruction. Parallel traditions in anthropological linguistics have discovered similar complexity in classroom discourse—for instance, Lemke (1990) following Halliday (1978), and Wortham (1994) following Silverstein (1984). These traditions provide the rigorous sociolinguistic tools needed to study the implemented curriculum.

This paper applies these methodological tools to a classroom discussion, in order to uncover the complex ways a planned curriculum can get transformed in practice. The analysis also illustrates how the implemented curriculum can have moral and political significance, in ways that critics of the planned curriculum might not foresee. The case below comes from a "great books" class, in which the planned curriculum involved classic Western texts. When we look at the implemented curriculum, however, we will see that the obvious criticism might not be the most appropriate in this case.

To explore this particular implemented curriculum, the analysis below focuses on a particular type of speech event—a "participant example" (Wortham, 1994). A participant example describes some actual or hypothetical event that *includes* at least one person also participating in the conversation. Participants with a role in the example have two interactionally relevant identities: as a participant in the conversation and a character in the example. When speakers talk about the example, their characterizations can have implications for participants in the conversation itself. In talking about someone's character in the example, a speaker may be implying something about the actual participant. Thus, in discussion of a participant example, relational issues among the actual teacher and students can intermingle with aspects of the official curriculum being discussed.

The data come from a three year study of "great books" classrooms. Pilot observations were made in six high school classrooms over the first two years. In the third year, one history and two English classes were observed for about 100 hours. Teachers and students were also interviewed in each of these three years. Notes from observations and interviews document beliefs and practices about the great books curriculum, social and relational issues salient to teachers and students, and attitudes toward examples as a pedagogical device. Eighty hours of classroom conversation were audiotaped during the third year. Nine hours were selected and transcribed. These transcripts were analyzed to identify the sociolinguistic devices teachers and students use in discussing the great books and in relating to each other.

Students and Spartans: overview

In preparation for this ninth grade history class, students have read selections from Plutarch's "Life of Lycurgus." The anthology from which it has been copied provides its own title for the selection: "The Spartan Totalitarian System." The students' readings contain a blurb written by the anthology editor that takes a clearly negative view of the Spartan political system. The editor describes Sparta as "culturally and economically stagnant." He describes Spartan citizens as "bees" who completely surrender their individuality and subordinate themselves to the state. This negative evaluation contradicts Plutarch's attitude toward Sparta. Plutarch presents Lycurgus' reforms as a noble though drastic social experiment that improved life in Sparta.

The classroom discussion focuses around the question of how to evaluate Spartan society. The teachers defend the Spartan system and the students attack it. At first, the teachers play devil's

advocate and defend shocking Spartan practices to goad students into participating. This strategy succeeds: the students speak out against public nudity for adolescent girls, wife-swapping for the sake of producing healthy children, and killing unhealthy infants because they will become a burden. By the middle of the class, however, the teachers defend the Spartans as passionately as the students attack them. As the following analysis shows, the teachers and students get so involved in this debate because the interactional subtext does not concern Spartans at all, but relations in the classroom and contemporary America. The overt conflict over the justice of the Spartan system is covertly a conflict over the social identity and worth of the students.

The class lasts eighty minutes. The two teachers, Mr. Smith and Mrs. Bailey, generally encourage discussion and refrain from lecturing, and in this class they are working to get student participation. For the first thirty-eight minutes of the class, however, students resist active involvement. Most speak only when spoken to, and some refuse to answer direct questions. This recalcitrance results largely from their ongoing struggle with Mr. Smith. In recent classes he has accused them of not doing the reading, and has begun to enforce disciplinary rules strictly. The students often respond with silence.

In the first 38 minutes the students do not participate in any sustained interchange. About 39 minutes into the class, a student (Jasmine) introduces the participant example that will be central to the interaction. This draws several students in. For most of the next 32 minutes, students participate actively with the teachers in discussing the example. This 32 minute segment contains most of the important interactional happenings, so my analysis focuses on it.

Figure 1 summarizes the development of the class' interactional structure. Time moves down the vertical axis. The three rows divide the class into segments. The first covers the initial

38 minutes, before Jasmine's example. The second covers from 39 to 59 minutes into the class, and the third covers from 60 to 71 minutes. These second and third segments comprise the crucial 32 minutes. I have made these divisions because the three segments have different primary denotational topics. These are represented in the left column of figure 1.

In the beginning of the class students and teachers talk about the Spartans—their child rearing practices, their marriage customs, etc. Students and teachers themselves do come up briefly as topics in the first 38 minutes, in two contexts: in metapragmatic discourse explicitly organizing the conversation, like "what did you say"; and in brief participant examples. A participant example does not become the primary topic until the second segment. In this segment students and teachers talk about Spartans independent of the participant example, but the example introduced by Jasmine dominates the conversation. In the third segment, the classroom itself and contemporary American society become the topic. Again, both Spartans and Jasmine's participant example are occasionally topics here, but they are secondary.

The rest of the figure contains six rectangles that represent personal pronoun usage and its interactional implications. I have numbered the rectangles in the order of their introduction into the conversation. My interpretation of the interactional events in this conversation centers on the introduction and transformation of these personal pronouns. Speakers use these personal pronouns to identify relevant social divisions. Looking at the personal pronoun pairs or oppositions helps us see how students and teachers divide up their social world.

These six personal pronoun pairs are the only ones that recur significantly. I have categorized every personal pronoun in the transcript. There are 579 personal pronouns used in 28 transcribed minutes (excluding those in *you know, I mean,* and false starts). 41% of these are part

of the oppositions described in figure 1. 32% of the personal pronouns used are indefinite *you* (used in generalizations) and forms used explicitly to manage the narrating interaction ("what did you say," etc.). 27% do not participate in any of the six major oppositions, but are used to refer to some other content. If we eliminate the 32% used for management and generalization, the oppositions my analysis is based on account for 60% of the personal pronouns used. This pervasive use establishes that I have not focused on transient oppositions that fit my analysis.

The top line of each rectangle gives the referents of the terms in the personal pronoun oppositions. These referents are essential to oppositions. Simply using *we* does not constitute an opposition to *they*. *We* and *they* must be used to refer to certain groups, such that each pronoun comes to presuppose the other pronoun and the other referent. Part of the meaning of each term in that segment of the conversation comes to be its juxtaposition with the other. The interactional group that each pronoun presupposes gets further specified through the contrast with the other. The systematic opposition of the two pronouns differentiates presupposed groups.

The bottom line of each rectangle gives terms used to *characterize* the social groups differentiated by the opposition. Groups established by systematic use of personal pronouns are usually characterized as being of some type from the larger society. Speakers accomplish this characterization largely through use of terms that index social types. Terms in parentheses in the figure are my glosses of speakers' characterizations. Other terms are those actually used by speakers. The terms on the left of the bottom line of each rectangle represent the teachers' characterizations, and those on the right, the students'.

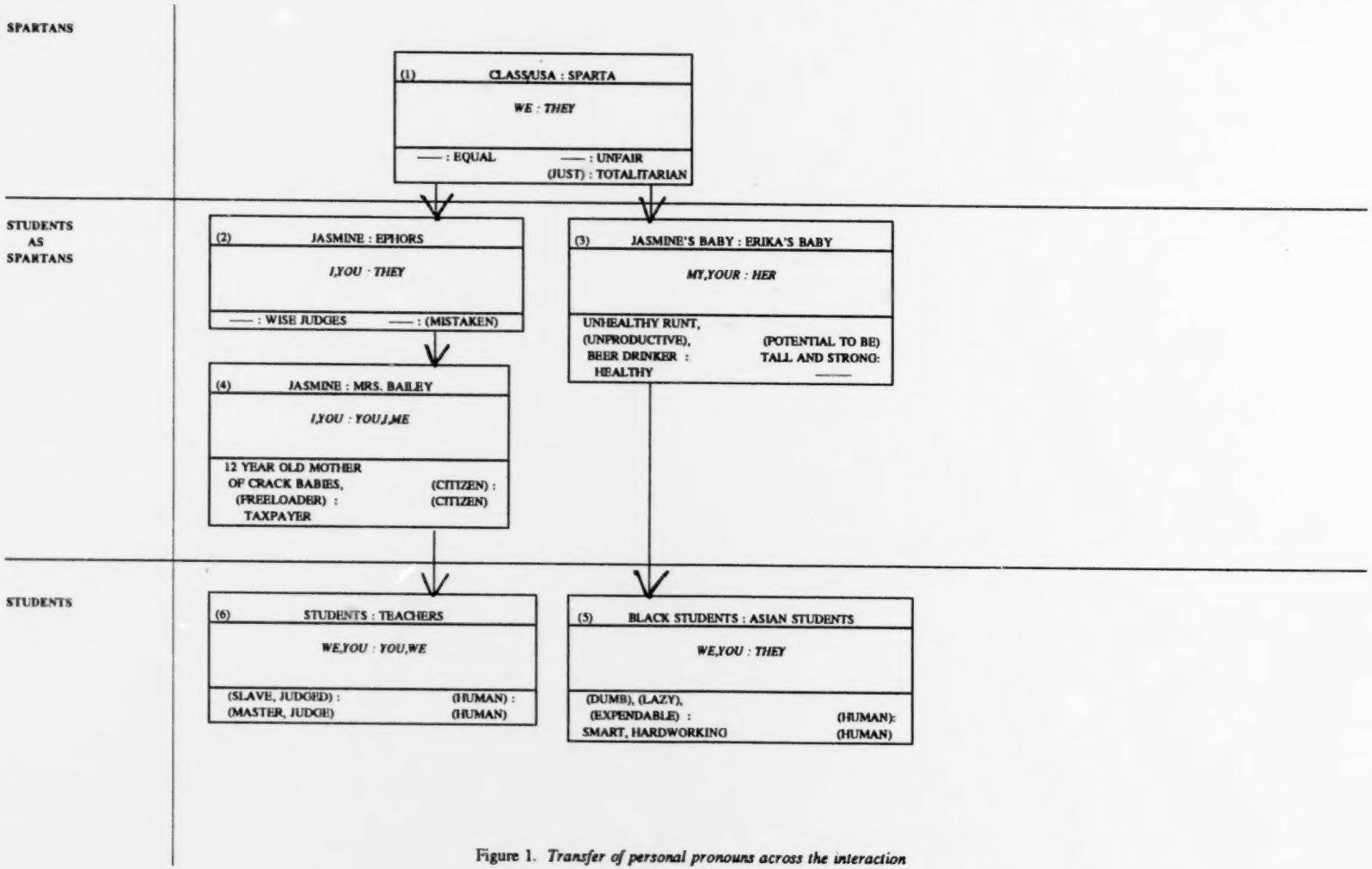
SPARTANS
(1) CLASS/USA : SPARTA
WE : THEY
—— : EQUAL
—— : UNFAIR
(JUST) : TOTALITARIAN
STUDENTS AS SPARTANS
(2) JASMINE : EPHORS
I,YOU : THEY
—— : WISE JUDGES
—— : (MISTAKEN)
(3) JASMINE'S BABY : ERIKA'S BABY
MY,YOUR : HER
UNHEALTHY RUNT, (UNPRODUCTIVE), BEER DRINKER : HEALTHY
(POTENTIAL TO BE) TALL AND STRONG: ——
(4) JASMINE : MRS. BAILEY
I,YOU : YOU,ME
12 YEAR OLD MOTHER OF CRACK BABIES, (FREELOADER) : TAXPAYER
(CITIZEN) : (CITIZEN)
STUDENTS
(6) STUDENTS : TEACHERS
WE,YOU : YOU,WE
(SLAVE, JUDGED) : (MASTER, JUDGE)
(HUMAN) : (HUMAN)
(5) BLACK STUDENTS : ASIAN STUDENTS
WE,YOU : THEY
(DUMB), (LAZY), (EXPENDABLE) : SMART, HARDWORKING
(HUMAN): (HUMAN)

Figure 1. *Transfer of personal pronouns across the interaction*

In the first 38 minutes, the primary opposition is between *we* and *they* [rectangle 1], referring to the class (and sometimes contemporary Americans) and to Spartans. Speakers use other personal pronouns in this segment, but they do not set up other pervasive oppositions.

At the beginning of the second segment, in the following passage, Jasmine introduces herself as a hypothetical Spartan mother. Mr. Smith is defending the Spartan practice of killing unhealthy infants for the benefit of the larger society. (See the appendix for a list of transcription symbols.)

T/S: ├ and if you bring someone in=
JAS: ├((* 3 syll *))
T/S: =there that isn't going to do their share as the wall of Sparta. you're giving that- that person, something that could be used better bu- by someone else. I- I sort of think that's perfectly right ├ if a baby=
JAS: ├that's not-
T/S: =can't hack it you get rid of it. that's going to be a problem in the future.=
JAS: they- they not equal if- if she had a baby and hers lived and I had a baby and mine didn't. we not equal.
T/B: yeah you're right. you didn't produce a healthy baby.
T/S: that's ├right
JAS: ├how do you know that. they just say that one ain't healthy. and then lookit. mine probably grew up to be taller and ├ stronger
T/S: ├because they're the Spartan Ephors ├ who make a decision. the Ephors know what makes a=
JAS: ├and ((* 5 syll *))
T/S: =good Spartan because they're sixty years old and they've seen an awful lot. and they know what makes a good soldier. they've been in it from the time they were seven.

The student (JAS, or Jasmine) introduces herself as a participant example in lines 37-38. She also nominates another student in the class ("she") as a second hypothetical Spartan mother. Jasmine now has two interactionally relevant identities: as a student participating in class discussion, and as a hypothetical Spartan mother. As we will see below, discussion of Jasmine's identity within the example sends implicit messages about Jasmine-the-student herself in the classroom conversation.

This example describes two types of relationships: that between the two hypothetical Spartan mothers, which is a relationship between the privileged and the unprivileged; and that between Jasmine as a mother and the Ephors. The Ephors were a committee of Spartan elders who made executive decisions, including those about which babies would be killed. Every newborn had to be taken to the Ephors for judgment. If the Ephors said it was unhealthy enough that it would be a drain on society, it was left outside to die. The relationship between Jasmine-as-mother and the Ephors is that between subordinate and master.

In discussing this example, Jasmine and subsequent speakers use two new personal pronoun oppositions. Jasmine uses *I* to refer to herself in her role as the Spartan mother of an unhealthy child. Other speakers—primarily the teachers—use *you* to refer to her in this role. Jasmine and the teachers systematically oppose *I,you* to *they*, the Spartan Ephors [rectangle 2]. (Two forms separated by a comma have the same referent but are spoken by different people. Jasmine uses *I* to refer to herself as a Spartan mother, while the teachers use *you*.)

The second opposition in this second segment comes in Jasmine and the teachers' discussion of her baby. *My,your* (i.e., Jasmine's) baby systematically contrasts with *her* baby [rectangle 3]. *Her* refers to another student whom Jasmine has nominated to be the hypothetical Spartan mother of a healthy baby. There is no verbal record of who this student is, but my notes indicate it is Erika. This becomes important later on, because Erika—as the best student in the class—occupies a particular position relative to Jasmine and the others.

These two oppositions [2,3] set up within the frame of the example map out part of the relational structure of Spartan life. Two types of relationship in particular are drawn from Sparta and mapped onto Jasmine and Erika's hypothetical characters: mothers confronting powerful people

who decide the fate of their children; and mothers who produce productive children vs. those who do not. In the bottom lines of rectangles 2 and 3, we see that students and teachers further characterize these relationships, in different ways.

To interpret speakers' implicit characterizations of the social groups mapped out by oppositions, we need more cultural background information. These teachers and students come from two different political groups: a subgroup of working class whites, whose members generally suspect the integrity of the welfare system; and "progressive" blacks, who generally favor government intervention on behalf of minorities. In this context, the teachers' characterization of Jasmine's baby as an unhealthy, beer-drinking runt [rectangle 3] indexes stereotypes about lazy welfare recipients sponging off those who work. This culturally located characterization becomes important as the class shifts from a discussion of Sparta to an interactional struggle in the classroom itself.

This shift is represented by the vertical arrows in figure 1, and it is the key to the interactional dynamics of the class. The oppositions in rectangles 2 and 3 (*I,you:they* and *my,your:her*) are systematically replaced by other oppositions [4 & 5]. The new personal pronoun oppositions are related to the old ones because the role relationships of the two pairs are homologous. That is, the characterization of the social groups set up by the oppositions is similar. For instance, oppositions 2, 4 and 6 all involve relations between subordinates and superiors. Jasmine-as-mother:Ephors :: Jasmine-as-student:teachers :: students:teachers [2::4::6].

These particular personal pronoun oppositions are not *necessarily* homologous. As linguistic forms, *I,you:they* [2] have no privileged intrinsic connection to *I,you:you,I,we* [4]. But in this interaction, social and ethical characterizations made about characters in the participant examples

using the first oppositions [2 & 3] are transferred onto students and teachers themselves, through the later oppositions [4 & 5]. Work done in dividing the students' hypothetical identities (as Spartans) into social groups, and in characterizing these groups, is not lost when the conversation shifts from the example to the class itself. These interactional divisions and characterizations are *transferred* onto groups set up in the narrating interaction itself—the teachers and students. A set of relationships emerges for the classroom participants because aspects of Spartan social organization get transferred, via the example, and come to organize relations in the classroom.

This transfer is facilitated by analogies that exist between the types of relationship present in Sparta and those present in the classroom and contemporary America. Like Spartan mothers who must submit their children to be judged, students must submit to teachers' judgments [2,4,6]. And like Spartans deemed inadequate and unproductive, members of the students' social group (lower class blacks) are dispossessed in favor of others [3,5].

The complex process through which the transfer takes place unfolds over the 32 minute segment. The detailed analysis in the next section traces this process step by step. Here I only sketch the big picture: two types of relationship are drawn from Spartan life and mapped onto participants' characters in the participant example. These relationships, and the personal pronouns that speakers use to put certain people in certain roles, provide an implicit structure both for the interactions denoted as the example and for the interaction acted out in the classroom. The role relationships are set up and maintained by two oppositions (*I,you:they* [2] and *my,your:her* [3]). These two role relationships are then transferred onto new oppositions (*I,you:you,I,we* [4] and *we,you:them* [5]) that refer not to the characters in the example but the teachers and students themselves. Through these two sets of homologous oppositions, the political and ethical issues

raised and debated about the Spartan system are applied to the groups present in the narrating interaction itself.

The interactional significance of this transfer becomes clear as social identities are attached to the terms in each of the oppositions. Through indexical cues (summarized in the bottom line of each rectangle), speakers give characters in the example social identities. Then these identities get transferred onto the teachers and students themselves. This happens gradually, as indexical linkages are made between identifiable social types and the groups mapped out by personal pronoun oppositions. In this conversation, definite social identities are transferred from Sparta to characters in the participant example, and then onto teachers and students themselves. Through this transfer, these homologous sets of social identities come to organize the classroom interaction. Interactional structure gets drawn from Sparta, through the example, into the classroom. The participant pronoun oppositions help create and maintain this interactional structure. (See Table 2 for a summary of this interactional structure).

Table 2. The Roles Sketched and Occupied in the Discussion

SCHEMA	*TEXT*	*EXAMPLE*	*CLASS*
Powerful	Ephors	Teachers	White teachers
Privileged	Spartan citizens	Erika	Asian students
Unprivileged	Helots	Jasmine	Black students

As presented by the teachers, the interactional subtext is that they and productive people like them are tired of paying taxes for "freeloaders" like the students. This mirrors the common white working class claim that lazy minorities sponge off them through the welfare system. The students

resist this characterization of themselves, and claim that they have as much of a right as anyone to the benefits of society. (I have moved quickly to the interactional punch line here. The detailed analysis in the next section shows how these interactional identities emerge).

I must emphasize that these are glosses of the *implicit* interactional import of a complex pattern of language use. Analysis requires explicit interpretation of interactional happenings and agentive descriptions of speakers' interactional contributions. But I do not mean to imply that participants are aware of these interactional patterns. They are surely not. This is not overt classroom discrimination, but a subtle relational pattern that apparently unprejudiced teachers fall into. The systematic use of pronouns and other indexical cues provides strong evidence that the speakers *do* send, orient and respond to the interactional messages glossed above. But participants are generally unaware of such interactional linguistic processes. I sat through this class and had no idea of what specifically was going on. I knew that speakers were emotionally involved in the discussion, but I made no notes about race or even interactional conflict. It takes hours of analysis to map and interpret the dense indexical cues that speakers unconsciously use and read on the fly in interacting.

Students and Spartans: detailed analysis

This section goes through the classroom conversation step by step, and analyzes several key segments where personal pronoun oppositions are introduced or elaborated. In the first 38 minutes of the class, deictics in general and personal pronouns in particular get used to distinguish two denoted realms. *We, here, this,* and the present tense refer to the classroom; *they, there, that,* and

the past tense refer to Sparta. Occasionally the *we, here, this* set refers to modern American society, but it more often refers to the classroom interaction. This systematic usage presupposes a sharp distinction between the students and teachers, and the Spartans.

With the introduction of Jasmine's participant example 39 minutes into the class, this distinction starts to blur. A participant example metaphorically shifts talk about the subject matter closer to the classroom interaction. Points about Sparta now get made as if the speakers were talking about Jasmine. From this point on, the discussion of subject matter has implications for both Sparta and the classroom interaction.

The following excerpt was introduced above. Jasmine objects to the Spartans' killing unhealthy children for the common good.

btJAS: no that ain't right. go through all the trouble to have
a child (* you want *) it to live.
wαT/S: but Jasmine why isn't it right. you've divided the
state equally. and so everyone gets an equal amount of
land. and money. and food. and clothing. and they get
this equal amount. ⊨ and if you bring someone in=
JAS: ⊨((* 3 syll *))
T/S: =there that isn't going to do their share as the wall
of Sparta. you're giving that- that person, something
that could be used better bu- by someone else. I- I
sort of think that's perfectly right ⊨ if a baby=
JAS: ⊨that's not-
T/S: =can't hack it you get rid of it. that's going to be a
problem in the future.=
JAS: they- they not equal if- if she had a baby and hers
lived and I had a baby and mine didn't. we not equal.
T/B: yeah you're right. you didn't produce a healthy baby.
T/S: that's ⊨right
JAS: ⊨how do you know that. they just say that one ain't healthy. and then lookit.
mine probably grew up
to be taller and ⊨ stronger
T/S: ⊨because they're the Spartan Ephors
⊨ who make a decision. the Ephors know what makes a=
JAS: ⊨and ((* 5 syll *))
T/S: =good Spartan because they're sixty years old and
they've seen an awful lot.

Lines 37ff. contain the first participant example that is picked up by both teachers and students in this class session. Jasmine presents herself as a hypothetical Spartan mother, by using *I*, and the teachers ratify this using definite *you*. This example does not pass quickly. Speakers return to it repeatedly over the next 32 minutes. Within this participant example, we get the first uses of *I:they* :: Jasmine:Ephors [2] and *mine:hers* :: Jasmine's baby:Erika's baby [3]. (This notation represents a personal pronoun opposition and, after the double colon, the referents of the pronouns).

Social characterization of the groups mapped out by these oppositions starts immediately. Jasmine points out that under the Spartan system her baby and Erika's baby are unequal, and implies that this inequality is unjust. The teachers claim that this inequality is justified. Jasmine says the Ephors are prone to make mistakes. Mr. Smith denies this characterization, by presenting the Ephors as wise and experienced.

As they continue discussing the example, the social characterization continues:

JAS: if she had a baby and- and hers lived and mine died we not equal. and if they want it to be- everybody to be equal then I (* should've got to kept *) mine too.
T/B: what- wait a second. you're baby's going to grow up and be this unhealthy runt. ⊨ her baby's going to grow=
ατSTS: ⊨hahaha
T/B: =up and be: healthy
JAS: I'm equal to her then
T/B: yeah you're equal. but you know take it twenty years in the future. her baby's going to have to do what for your baby. you're baby's going to do what. lay around.
αST?: hahahaha drinking beer
ατSTS: haha ⊨haha haha hahaha haha
T/B: ⊨drinking beer. eating their- their bean soup.

According to Mrs. Bailey, Jasmine's baby is naturally inferior (an unhealthy runt), unproductive (lying around), and intemperate. This harsh characterization narrows down the social identity Mrs. Bailey attributes to the child and its mother. Only certain sorts of people are lazy drunkards.

A few seconds later comes the first use of *us* as opposed to *you* (referring to Jasmine). Here the *I,you:you,I,we,* :: Jasmine:Mrs. Bailey opposition [4] is introduced.

T/B: yeah but see you're- you- but that's the
⊨ hitch isn't it? you've got this baby that's not=
JAS: ⊨I'm sayin'-
JAS: ⊨I know. so ((* 3 syll *))
T/B: =healthy ⊨and you're afraid's going to go in the army.
(* breathless inhalation *)) and why should the rest
of us ⊨ s- support your baby.
τασTS: ⊨hahaha
τST?: are you saying=
JAS: if they wanted them to be equal then even if my child
was retarded or whatever he should go into the army too

Mrs. Bailey sounds angry in this excerpt. She attributes a definite social identity to Jasmine's baby: he is an unproductive freeloader. Mrs. Bailey and her social group—whoever else is included in *us*—are taxpayers forced to support such people.

A few minutes later Mrs. Bailey continues her characterization of Jasmine's baby.

T/B: I mean- what is the problem with this Jasmine. we're-
what do we do. let anybody mate with everybody else in
our society. we've got all of these crack babies. and
all of these- you know babies that are born to twelve
year olds and ar- are premature and therefore have all
these problems. we have mental incompetents mating with
mental incompetents producing children. and going back
to our discussions on the ((* 2 syll *)) and- and
Aristotle's Politics, I'm tired of footing the bill for
these people. if you can have a healthy baby fine., but
why should I have to contribute to the support of your
retarded kids and you just keep producing them.
τST?: go:d.
T/B: they're not going to contribute to me in my old age and
I have to contribute to them now.
JAS: when you say married you mean (3.0) ⊨well what is=
ατSTS: ⊨hahaha
JAS: =the definition of married ⊨ (1.0) and I don't=
bαMRC: ⊨commitment. ((* 8 syll *))
JAS: =know- OK- OK- when you having kids (1.0) alright (2.0)
you put- you payin' where all (* of our *) crack babies
or whatever (2.0) it ain't the same.

This excerpt continues the Mrs. Bailey:Jasmine opposition [4], and adds to the characterization. This time Mrs. Bailey's tone is sharp enough that another student treats her actions as inappropriate (line 22). Jasmine's tone in lines 25ff. is pointed—she seems to want to defend herself—but her opposition fizzles. Immediately after this excerpt the denotational topic of the conversation shifts, and the overt tension diminishes.

In Mrs. Bailey's speech (lines 10-24), several other shifter categories move toward the *we, here, this* set: she uses *we, I, these, now,* and the present tense. Denotationally, she is still talking about Spartan practices and Jasmine as a hypothetical Spartan. In the first 38 minutes of the class, these topics would have been discussed using *they, there, then,* and the past tense. The shifters change because the interactional message here concerns the classroom interaction.

Interactionally, Mrs. Bailey is casting Jasmine—and, as becomes clear later, the students in general—as members of a social group opposed to her own. In the last excerpt, she attributes a clear social identity to the students' group. Members of this group include twelve year old mothers, mothers of crack babies, and mental incompetents. These characteristics seem to index the black lower class that most of these students come from. (These girls are fourteen, and students their age in this school routinely have children. The year before, two of the eight girls in these teachers' ninth grade class got pregnant during the school year).

The teachers and Jasmine continue their dispute over the moral status of Spartan society. The interactional subtext in the classroom also continues.

wαT/S: what's wro:ng with that system. as Mrs. Bailey said.
why should she have to support your, misfits and sort
of:, half mean children all her life?
bτJAS: everybody else doing it ((* 4 syll *))
5 T/S: not in Sparta.
ατSTS: hahahahaha
wτT/B: and obviously in Sparta there were a lot of other

people who didn't want to do it.
JAS: that is kind of to-tali-tarian ((* exaggerated *))
10 τσSTS: hahahahahahahaha
JAS: you've got to do it. you- you don't have no faith so you've got to do it. you've got to deal with my crack kids or whatever.
τσSTS: hahaha ⊢haha ⊢hahahahaha
15 T/B: ⊢no- no I don't because in this to-ta ⊢li-tarian ((* mocking *)) sy(hh)stem we have all come to- an understanding. and that is that we are- we have no place for your crack baby.

The *I,you:you,I,we* opposition [4] recurs here. This segment also gives further indication that the narrating interaction itself is at issue, when Jasmine picks up Mrs. Bailey's substitution of "crack baby" for "unhealthy baby." Of course no Spartan mother could have had a crack baby, so it becomes clearer that Jasmine represents her own social group as well as Spartan mothers.

In this excerpt Jasmine does some characterization also. She calls the Spartan system "totalitarian." And she claims that in our society taxpayers like Mrs. Bailey have to deal with crack kids. Justification for this claim comes later, when she and other students implicitly argue that all humans have the right to survive, and that our society protects this right. Mrs. Bailey denies Jasmine's claim (line 15). Indexing her power, she uses the pronoun of authority (*we*) and speaks for the larger group. Jasmine is excluded from *we*, and she apparently has no recourse. With this overt display of the teachers' power, we start to see the isomorphism between the teachers and the Ephors (*they*:Ephors slipping into *I,we*:teachers [2 into 4,6]). As more cues are given, speakers come to presuppose more and more strongly that discussion of the example is organizing the narrating interaction itself.

About 60 minutes into the class, the denotational topic shifts from Jasmine's example to a discussion of American society. This remains the topic for about 11 minutes. The following excerpt introduces it:

T/B: to go back t- to what- Cassandra was saying. she said- you know they make their society we make our society. we make certain rules they make certain rules. I- I guess what I want y- to ask is, how do we make our society. °I mean° why do we have the rules that we have. why is it that I pay taxes to support Jasmine's tax or- crack baby over here. (2.0) or that if Maurice falls down a flight of stairs we pay him disability benefits for a while.

Here Mrs. Bailey returns to the original opposition of *we:they* :: USA:Sparta. But instead of discussing Spartan practices in the third person, she opens the topic of our practices in the first person, as a case to be compared with Sparta. Making our society the denotational topic is the culmination of the shift from discussing the denoted content, Sparta, to discussing more explicitly what has become the subtext—the students' and the teachers' relative social status.

But teachers and students do not give up all the interactional work they have done while discussing the participant example. This becomes clear in line 6 when Mrs. Bailey mentions her taxes and Jasmine's crack baby. Here she *imports* the interactional distinctions and characterizations made through the participant example, and applies them to the class and modern American society.

This is the second stage of movement from Sparta to the classroom interaction. Political and ethical issues raised in the context of Spartan society (for instance, how should the disadvantaged be treated?) are first applied to the participant example. Now the positions that have been taken on these political and ethical issues are transferred again, into a discussion of American society, the teachers and the students. The structure of roles and characterizations set up while discussing the example comes to organize the classroom interaction.

One important component of this transfer is the move from *my,your: her* :: Jasmine's baby:Erika's baby [3] to *we,you:them* :: black students:Asian students [5], in the following excerpt:

T/B: yeah prosperity is money riches wealth. OK. how do- how
do we become a rich, nation. a powerful nation.
CAN: work hard? work for it.
55 T/B: you've got ⊨to work for it.
CAS: ⊨((* 4 syll *)) good education
T/B: you've got to have a good education. why.
MAR: like some um, like some of them Asian women are taking
over 'cause they are smart.
60 τSTS: Asians Asian girls hnh
T/B: because they work hard?
ταSTS: ((* 2 sec overlapping comments *))
T/B: they just don't work harder than you do.
MAR: they work hard but they smart too.
65 JAS: they have to be smart to learn all them signs.
αταSTS: hahaha ⊨ ((* overlapping comments and laughter *))
T/S: ⊨if- if that's the case Martha. if
that's- if that's the case because they're smart and they work
hard, then because you're not smart you don't work hard
70 maybe ⊨ we should throw you in the glen early to give=
τST?: ⊨((* 6 syll *))
T/S: =them the benefit?
τST?: ((* 2 syll *)) that smart
CAN: there's this- there's this boy I know he just came
75 from- India and stuff and I swear °you know° he- he
learned how to speak English in about a month. like
this. ((* snaps fingers *)) smart.
T/S: so why should we waste time with you. I think we'd best
go to him and work with him. and he'll be our best
80 future citizen.=
T/B: make them the Helots.
τSTS: ⊨hnhhnh
T/S: ⊨that's right. I like that idea.

This is the most shocking part of the class, because here the interactional work that goes on *throughout* becomes denotationally explicit. At lines 67-80, Mr. Smith clearly connects the opposition between black students and Asian students to the opposition between Jasmine's and Erika's baby (by, e.g., talking about throwing these black students "in the glen" at line 70; Plutarch

says that unfit Spartan babies were left "in a glen" to die). He also characterizes the two groups: Asian students are smart and they work hard; black students are dumb and lazy.

Mr. Smith picks up the opposition *we:you* :: teachers:students [6] here. The homology between this *we:you* opposition and the *I,you:they* :: Jasmine:Ephors opposition [2] is clear. Teachers have the power to "throw children in the glen"—to discard them for the common good (line 70). Unlike the Ephors, teachers cannot order a student's death. But they can damage her educational record, and this affects the student's standing in the community. Like unhealthy Spartan infants, the students apparently have no power to resist.

This one excerpt contains instances of both crucial sets of transferred personal pronoun oppositions (*mine:hers* [3] → *us,you:them* [5] and *I,you:they* [2] → *you:we* [6]). The role relationships taken from the reading on Sparta, and elaborated in the participant example, are being transferred onto participants in the classroom interaction. Speakers use new but homologous oppositions to map out the interactional groups in the classroom. Various indexicals are used to characterize the groups' social identities further—like the evaluative terms "smart" and "hardworking." These indexical characterizations further reinforce the parallel between the black students and the subordinate, underprivileged members of Spartan Society.

Mrs. Bailey's comment at line 81—"make them the Helots"—is a condensed version of the teachers' overall interactional message. The Helots were serfs or slaves who farmed the land around Sparta, allowing Spartan citizens a life of leisure. Helots outnumbered Spartans ten to one, so citizens always feared a revolt. The reading describes two ways Spartan citizens reduced the

threat: they periodically snuck out of the city at night and murdered Helot men; and they invited strong, eloquent Helots into the city on the pretense of honoring their talents, then they killed them.

In an earlier segment, Mr. Smith has described the first of these strategies as a "game." He compares this murdering of Helots to "evening a herd of deer." This assigns a definite social identity to Helots—expendable animals. So when Mrs. Bailey proposes making the students Helots she is making a strong, but *implicit*, interactional statement (white teachers:black students :: Spartans:Helots :: masters:slaves :: humans:animals). Without a detailed interactional analysis Mrs. Bailey's statement might be dismissed as a joke, though perhaps one in bad taste. But given race relations in the larger society, her implicit interactional move is quite serious.

As the class continues discussing the analogy between Sparta and modern America, the teachers further apply the distinction between healthy and unhealthy babies (implicitly between productive and unproductive citizens) to the students:

T/S: OK the people. suppose those people that make up the
135 country are cracked. o:r u:h have problems. o:r really
aren't the strongest. or are the shortest. they have
rights too?
τSTS: hahahaha
T/S: or talk too much. °we've got to add that too of course°
140 do they have rights too? ⊦what rights.
τST?: ⊦yeah

Mr. Smith is resisting the students' claim that all citizens have equal rights. He first distinguishes productive from unproductive citizens. Note the use of "cracked," pointing back to the discussion of crack babies—which were like the babies rejected by the Spartan Ephors. Mr. Smith's aside in line 139 makes clear that the students are being indexed as unproductive. He often complains that

these students "talk too much." By adding this to his list of unproductive people's characteristics, he includes the students in this social category.

The teachers extricate themselves from the explicit analogy between Sparta and America in a clever way. They preserve their claim that we *are* similar to Sparta, by saying that both societies are trying to make their citizens "productive." But they co-opt the students' claim that our society is more just, by claiming that we allow all children to live because we have institutions that compensate for natural deficiencies. On the implicit interactional level, however, they draw the same distinction between productive and unproductive.

245 T/B: when- when I- we want a society of productive individuals but we also say anyone that's born has a right to survive. (1.0) K- now what do we want to do with all these surviving individuals. what's in the best interest in our society?

250 CAS: use them.

T/B: to use them to make them productive. which means we might have to do a few things in between right? we might have to give them an education. we might have to also what? (3.0) job training. create jo:b programs.

255 T/S: make them healthy. (1.0)

T/B: give pre-natal care.

T/S: make certain they have homes.

τST?: no

ταSTS: ⊢hahahahaha haha

260 T/B: ⊢ talk about sex education in- in- in- in classes so that kids are not producing children at an- at too early an age. (1.0)

CAS: talk about diseases.

T/B: talk about diseases. set up health plans. you see we're

265 about the same thing as the Spartans are about in some ways. except we started with a different sense of who should live. we're trying to make people productive too.

From lines 252-262, the teachers are on a roll. Their timing and intonation make it sound like a rehearsed act. They use the opposition *we:they*, used above to refer to teachers:students [6]. The

teachers elaborate their implicit characterization of the students' social identity. *They* in this excerpt need to be *given* education, job training, health care, homes, and advice to keep them from becoming teenage mothers. *They* are just like the stereotyped picture of the students' social group, the black lower class on welfare. *We* are the taxpayers.

Despite their denotational claims about the differences between our society and Sparta, the teachers continue the two key interactional distinctions. (1) The original *mine:hers* opposition [3 → 5]. Teachers and students come from different social groups: productive and unproductive people (healthy and unhealthy babies, whites/Asians and blacks, etc.). (2) The original *I,you:them* opposition [2 → 4 → 6]. Like the Ephors, the teachers have the power to judge the students and influence their fate—through, for instance, grading.

The teachers' final *denotational* message is: in modern America we have moved beyond the Spartans; our society helps the disadvantaged to become productive, so that they can contribute to society and live fulfilling lives. But their implicit *interactional* message is: you are members of a parasitic social group that does not deserve equal rights; those in power like us will decide which of you are potentially productive and deserve to enjoy the benefits of society.

The students pick up this interactional message, and they do not accept it. Classroom power relationships put them at a disadvantage, but they resist the teachers and present their own alternative characterizations. At one point, students claim that in our society "we have rights" and "we got the *right* to sur*vive* if we *BORN*." Regardless of power relationships (teachers:students) and regardless of differential endowments (productive:unproductive), we all have equal rights.

After the teachers finish their bid to close the 32 minute segment, the students continue their resistance to the interactional message.

JAS: we- we like- we like them a little little bit.
T/B: just a little bit.
MAR: but then again we help- we help people. retarded kids.
τST?: yeah
T/B: but we do that why? ⊢why do we help
τST?: ⊢ ((* 5 sylls *)) retarded kids
have a right to survive.
T/B: because we start with the premise ⊢that the right=
τST?: ⊢((* 6 syll *))
CAN: ⊢((* 4 syll *)) are people.
T/B: =ah ⊢excuse me. they have a right to
survive and therefore if we were- Maurice do you have something to say....
((* beginning of disciplinary interlude *))

The students' tone here is angry. This continued resistance further indicates the existence of a deeper interactional level, because the students have no denotational ground to keep objecting. The teachers have explicitly accepted their characterization of our society as different from and morally superior to Sparta. In this last segment the students are not misunderstanding the teachers' denotational message, but resisting their interactional one.

In this case, the enactment of the participant example was discouraging. Even if one agrees with the teachers' political stance on welfare policy, their treatment of the students must seem inappropriate. Teachers should not characterize students based on their sociocultural background. At first glance this looks like a clear case of discrimination. However, Mrs. Bailey and Mr. Smith have spent the bulk of their working lives teaching minority children. They continue working in city schools partly out of a commitment to social equality. We should consider the possibility that the pathology here is social, not individual.

The interactional agenda pushed by Mrs. Bailey and Mr. Smith may come from larger social patterns and operate *through* them, in spite of their good intentions. Classroom interactions take place in and are influenced by a particular society, with its typical divisions and characterizations. These larger social forms include typical interactional patterns, that get played out in classrooms just as in other social locations.

In classroom participant examples, at least, such interactional patterns are often *submerged* in a different type of speech event. In the conversation analyzed above, and in most other participant examples I have studied, participants do not break out of the denotational or cognitive activity of giving an example. From an external analyst's point of view, they are *simultaneously* giving an example to illustrate some intellectual issue and participating in a complex interactional event. However, participants usually do *not* realize consciously what is going on in the submerged interaction, even though they do orient and respond to interactional cues at some implicit level.

This makes participant examples an interesting hybrid type of speech event, capable of supporting complex denotational and interactional activities simultaneously. This layering also raises the possibility that participants may only be acting *intentionally* at the more explicit level. We should ascribe intentions to the teachers and students at the level of the denotational speech event: they were exploring the example to enrich their understanding of the Spartan political system. But "unconscious intention" seems a problematic concept, so I prefer not to ascribe intentions to explain teachers and students' behavior at the implicit interactional level. This does not mean that discrimination at the implicit interactional level should be ignored. But efforts to

change it will do better to proceed by studying and modifying interactional processes, not by attributing intentions to individuals and then criticizing them.

Conclusion

What was the official curriculum in this instance? The teachers planned for students to learn about Lycurgus, and in particular for students to confront the sociocentric bias in ancient Sparta. The teachers also planned to play devil's advocate, by defending the Spartan system. And they may have planned to give a participant example to discuss these issues with. We must first note how successful they were: they got students involved in worrying about the struggle between duty to the group and the rights of individuals; and they used the contrast between Sparta and the USA to bring these issues alive for the students.

The degree of student involvement here argues against the typical criticism of "great books" curricula. One might expect a class of African American students to be alienated by a text from ancient Greece. As we have seen, however, quite the opposite occurred. The students were so drawn in by the larger issue raised in the text that they energetically discussed it for a long time. On the surface, then, this seems a successful implementation of the planned curriculum. Students both engaged with and reflected on the larger issue the teachers intended.

As we have seen, however, the implemented curriculum differed substantially from the planned curriculum. The discussion did in fact have unpleasant moral consequences. But these happened in a much more subtle way than expected. Two conclusions can be drawn: (1) if we are

interested in the moral and political consequences of school curricula, we must attend to the implemented curriculum as well; (2) we should not jump to conclusions about the politics of official curricula, without attending to their practical implementation.

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List of Transcription Symbols

I have used the following symbols in transcribing conversation:

'-'	for abrupt breaks or stops (if several, stammering)
'?'	for rising intonation
'.'	for falling intonation
'_'	(underline) for stress
'CAPS'	for heavy stress
(1.0)	for silences, measured in seconds
'⊨'	indicates simultaneous talk by two speakers
'='	interruption or next utterance following immediately, or continuous talk represented on separate lines because of need to represent overlapping comment on intervening line
'(* *)'	doubtful transcription or conjecture
'((* *))'	transcriber comment
':'	elongated vowel
'º...º'	segment quieter than surrounding talk
'(hh)'	laughter breaking into words while speaking.
'τ'	female
'α'	male
'w'	white
'b'	black
'h'	Hispanic
'a'	Asian